

# Hillandale



Journal of the  
City of London  
Phonograph and  
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

February 1987 No. 154

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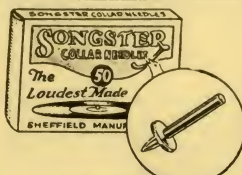
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# THE HILLAN

Official Journal of the City of London P  
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EDITOR: Christopher Proudfoot, [REDACTED] Dartford, Kent DA3 8LX  
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## ILLUSTRATIONS

The Songster and Piccadilly ads on the front cover this month come from a wholesale catalogue of about 1929, put out by the Runwell Cycle company.

The similar page reproduced on Page 153 is from the 1930 catalogue of Kirmer (Kirk & Merrifield) of Birmingham. It is hoped that the list of spring sizes on the left may be useful, and the tennis eye shades provide some light relief... Page 143 is from the same catalogue: the Maestrophonic is a thinly-disguised Paillard product, and is similar to the Decca Rally and HMV 99: 'sideways-on' portables with metal motor-boards were a short-lived fashion of the time.

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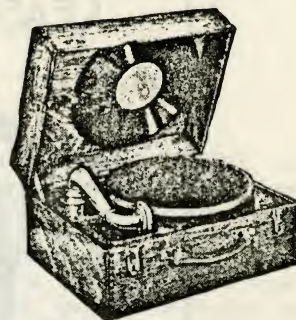
Price each	23/5
Retail price	£1/16/-



**"ALBA" PORTABLE MODEL, No. 402.**

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Price each	27/4
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Nett Price each	34/2
Retail price	£2/12/6

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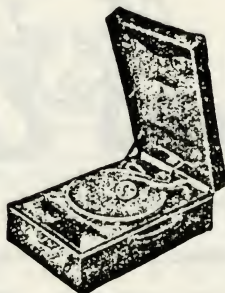


**"ALBA" PORTABLE MODEL, No. 552.**

Height 6½in., Length 11in., Depth 16in.

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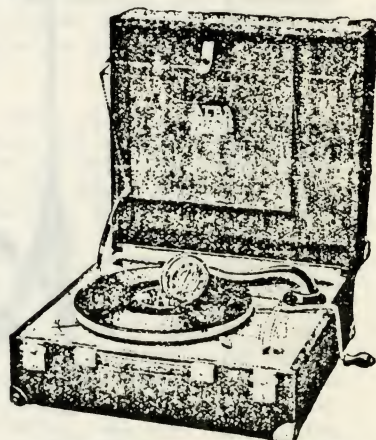
Price each	35/9
Retail price	£2/15/-



**"ALBA" NEW PORTABLE MODEL, No. 502.**

Height 6½in., Length 12in., Depth 17½in.  
Strongly constructed Wood Case, covered **Best Quality Morocco grained Leather Cloth**. Metal corner protectors and rubber feet. Fitted new "Alba" Automatic Needle Container, Powerful worm driven motor, 10-in. plush covered turntable, new "Alba" tonearm, "Alba" Maestrophonic 1930 No. 2 Soundbox, with all metal Diaphragm and copper oxidised Protector.

Nett price each	45/6
Retail Price	£3/10/-



**"ALBA" MAESTROPHONIC PORTABLE.**

Height 7½in., Length 14½in., Depth 15½in.  
Case covered in best quality **Leather Cloth**. Brass Corner Protectors and Rubber Feet. Fitted with **Double Spring Motor**, Tonearm, Soundbox. Amplifier, etc., are mounted in one all metal unit, ensuring tone free from rattle. Fitted with **Non-Set Automatic Brake**, which stops any record. Complete with Record Holder.

Nett Price each	£3/8/3
Retail price	£5/5/-

SEASON

1907





# Vesta Victoria's American Tour, 1907

by David Goldenberg

Although Miss Victoria made several tours in America, beginning in 1893, the 1907 appearance was one of special significance. According to Variety, she received the highest amount of any European vaudeville performer: \$3,000 a week for her twenty week tour. She also recorded for the Victor Talking Machine Company and her records sold very well. Moreover, she was invited back for a second tour which lasted through the first half of 1908. Why such adulation? Perhaps it can be explained by her style which was a mixture of coy and innocence, giving innuendos and the impression of being 'naughty'. Or the poor girl putting one over on the 'swells'. These characteristics, along with her sing-along melodies which were easy to follow, made her extraordinarily successful in America and her native land.

There had always been an exchange between American and British performers, but this year seemed to be exceptional. In addition to Miss Victoria, Alice and Marie Lloyd made extensive tours as did Harry Lauder and Gus Elen. Variety noted this warm reception to British artists by stating that they readily identified with working people in their everyday lives. Alice Lloyd and Harry Lauder also made recordings for Victor that year which were successful.

Klaw and Erlanger, the vaudeville producers, had brought her here to begin the new year in New York. She was last seen here in 1906 and had been enthusiastically received. A reception was held at the Colonial Theater where she opened the second week in January. Sime Silverman's glowing review in the January 19th issue of Variety attests her popularity:

"With the reappearance of Vesta Victoria in this country at the Colonial Theater this week, comes a successor to her former famous and popular song "Waiting at the Church". It is "Poor John". This is one of the three new numbers Miss Victoria sang on Monday evening. Of the others, "All About Him" is a sequel to the big song hit of last season and the first selection, "Never Trust a Policeman", while comic, will never be a success here. "It Ain't all Honey" and "The Artist's Model" were recollections of the past, and of course, the English comedienne had to sing her trade-mark for the final encore. The audience insisted upon it through two minutes of applause, but the edge was taken off by the sequel, which is melodious and humorous. "Poor John", however, is Miss Victoria's star piece. The chorus of it was sung by the audience at the second verse, Miss Victoria more than duplicating her former success. Thirty-six minutes is ample proof of that. Monday afternoon, forty-two minutes were required. Miss Vesta has not lost any of her charm; she still remains the magnetic, pretty, buxom character songstress, the idol of the New York public, unexcelled and impossible of imitation. Many try, but all fail."

Her engagement in New York continued through March, during which time she appeared on the cover of the March 9 issue of Variety. Then she began a road show, travelling to the west coast and back to Chicago. In each city, her performance

was so well received that Klaw and Erlanger offered her another contract for forty weeks, beginning in September. This would include her entire group, for which she would be paid \$5,000 weekly plus 50% of the gross receipts. In addition, Harry Lauder and Alice Lloyd were also booked for the fall season. Incidentally, Marie Lloyd was not as successful. Her innuendos seemed to puzzle American audiences and proved to be too much for the provinces in Britain.

By mid-May, she had returned to the Colonial and was greeted again by packed houses. Standees three deep were noted back of the orchestra rail during her final New York engagement of the season. Elsie Janis and La Belle Blanche were also on the bill with her, the latter famed for her imitations. It was during this time that she received a judgement of \$104.00 from the Lexington Hotel in a damage suit, claiming that some personal effects had been stolen. In June, she played a week at the Savoy Hotel in Atlantic City, closing on the 15th. From there, Variety noted, she would go to Philadelphia (actually Camden, New Jersey) to "sing into phonographs". These were the three sessions for Victor which resulted in the release of nine single-face discs:

June 17, 1907

B-4592-1	Poor John	Rejected
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June 18, 1907

B-4592-2	Poor John	Rejected
B-4594-1	Man, Man, Man (Girls, You're thinking too much of the Men)	Victor 5221
B-4595-1	I've Told His Missus All About Him	5249, G & T GC-3752
B-4596-1	Summer Blouses	rejected
B-4597-1	It aint all Honey and It Aint All Jam	5251
B-4598-1	The Artist's Model (It's All Right In the Summertime)	Rejected
B-4599-1	Billie Green	5184
B-4600-1	Waiting At The Church	5182
B-4601-1	The Next Horse I Ride On	5181

June 20, 1907

B-4592-3	Poor John	5183
B-4506-1	He Calls Me His Own Grace Darling	5250
B-4607-1	Oh Girls, Never Trust A Policeman	Rejected

These sessions were recorded in New York, according to Rust and Debus. However, Variety suggests they were done in Camden. In any case, she was in New York on June 21, where she was presented with a loving cup at the New York Roof by Klaw & Erlanger. The next day, both she and Alice Lloyd sailed for London after a highly successful tour.

There was another recording session for Edison, from which one cylinder was issued:

C. June, 1907

I Told His Missus All About Him	EDISON 10354
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Columbia issued a medley of songs played by Prince's Orchestra:

C. June 1907

3643-1	Medley of Vesta Victoria's Songs (Introducing "Waiting at the Church", "It's all right in the Summertime", "All About Town", "Poor John")	COLUMBIA 3643 HARMONY 1 A123
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- Georgia M. Miller - Jan. 10, 1918

# VESTA VICTORIA'S

NEW SONGS



*Featured by the  
FAMOUS ENGLISH  
COMEDIENNE ON  
HER THIRD  
AMERICAN TOUR*

## POOR JOHN!

BY

LEIGH & PETHER

Writers Of

"Waiting at the Church"



She returned to America in September, opening at the New York Theater. Variety's review in the September 28th issue again praised her act:

"Applause and flowers greeted Vesta Victoria upon her reappearance Monday night, which occurred at the New York. The volume of applause, which continued at intervals over a number of the forty-nine minutes she occupied the stage, bore ample proof that hers is a popularity not easily lost. Together with which Miss Victoria sang three new songs. The audience joined in the choruses of two; the other, called "Queen of the Jukah Islands", entailing a special set, and an offspring of the American "Indian" idea, came a cropper, although having one funny line. The singer has a dress of leaves, and the song tells a story of being stranded on a South Sea Island, becoming the queen of the tribe, and to grace the position wearing only the leaves. In the first verse, Miss Victoria expresses fear of the result when the wind blows and the leaves begin to fall. Another Americanism exported and returned by the Englishwoman is "Will he Answer Googoo", an 'audience' number, and the successor to "Waiting at the Church" and "Poor John". Dressed in widow's weeds, Miss Victoria details her charms and asks, if anyone present would like to kiss her. There is a catchy air, and the chorus was repeated several times. The other new one is "Don't Get Married Any More, Ma", and this one was also greatly liked. Opening with "Billy Green", Miss Victoria was obliged to follow her new songs with "Poor John", and again in response to the hearty applause sang "Man", finally concluding with the chorus of "Goo Goo" once again. All this used up 49 minutes, giving Vesta Victoria the record for length of a single act in Vaudeville".

Each programme was supplied with a separate song sheet containing the choruses to her most popular tunes so that the audience could easily sing together. As noted in the discography, she recorded many songs from her act. A few were rejected including "Never Trust a Policeman" which Sime Silverman, in his review of January 19th, predicted would not be as successful.

A second road tour began in November with a week at the Forrest Theater in Philadelphia. This was followed by an engagement at the Tremont in Boston. Next came Chicago, where she played to 70,000 people during the first week of a two-week run. A running advertisement in Variety made everyone aware of her activities and song hits, a common practice still used. The Christmas issue featured a full page promotion that announced her as "the greatest success in America ever achieved by a foreign artist".

The new year, 1908, began with an interesting bill at the 58th Street Theater in New York. She was given equal billing with Eva Tanguay, who was considered to be one of the most vivacious performers in Vaudeville. The reviews did not say they performed together, but the show was a sell-out. In March, there was a week at the Columbia Theater in Cincinnati followed by performances in Kansas City, Missouri. While doing a Sunday show there, she was put under 'technical arrest' for violating the blue laws. However, this matter was soon forgotten after claiming she was unaware of the local laws concerning Sunday performances. The season ended the week of May 10th at the Orpheum in Omaha.

Before returning to New York, she stopped at the Majestic in Chicago for a final engagement. Her second tour had been an immense success, both artistically and financially. After thirty-three weeks, she earned a total of \$83,500 and returned with at least \$70,000. She sailed for home the first week in July 1908, and continued her career for many years. There were other visits to the USA (1926 and 1935),



# JOIN MISS Victoria in the Chorus of Her Songs

---

## “POOR JOHN”

John took me 'round to see his mother—his  
mother—his mother—his mother;  
And while he introduced us to each other,  
She weighed up everything I had on.  
She put me through a cross-examination  
I fairly boiled with aggravation.  
Then she shook her head,  
Looked at me and said,  
“Poor John, poor John!”

## “MAN, MAN, MAN”

Girls, you're thinking too much of the men  
If you knew what I know about men  
You'd look before you leap—  
Men are all right when they're fast asleep  
Oh—I've had some—I ought to know,  
If you can't see through 'em I can;  
It's something that's stuck in a ten dollar suit  
That's a man—man—man.

## “WAITING AT THE CHURCH”

There was I waiting at the church,  
Waiting at the church,  
Waiting at the church,  
When I found he left me in the lurch,  
Lor,' how it did upset me!  
All at once, he sent me 'round a note,  
Here's the very note,  
This is what he wrote,  
“Can't get away to marry you to-day,  
My wife won't let me.”

---

Enjoy Yourselves at **KEITH'S!**

but none would match the enormous impact of the 1907-1908 season.

#### REFERENCES

Variety, 1908, 1909

AN ACT HARD TO FOLLOW by Peter Leslie, Paddington Press, 1978

THE VAUDEVILLIANS by Anthony Slide, Arlington House, 1981

THE COMPLETE ENTERTAINMENT DISCOGRAPHY by Brian Rust and Allen G. Debus, Arlington House, 1973

Special thanks to John Petty for help with illustrations.

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## OBITUARIES

It was with a profound sense of shock that I received the news that Ray Howl had died.

I had known Ray for nineteen years, in fact since he turned up at the inaugural meeting of the Midlands Branch back in 1968. From that time onwards Ray had been a stalwart supporter of all the local CLPGS activities and the Howl's Collectors Quiz had become an annual institution at our meetings. Always ready to help and advise newer collectors and enthusiasts, Ray's guidance and support will be sadly missed. It seems impossible that his dry wit, humour and gentle smile will no longer grace Midlands Branch Meetings, phonofairs or record bazaars.

The deepest sympathy of all the Midlands area members is extended to Pat and the family.

Phil Bennett

It is inevitable in a society the size of ours that we should occasionally suffer the loss of a member, and it is particularly hard when two well-known members die within a few days of each other.

Ray Howl, of whom Phil Bennett has written above, will be widely missed, not only in the Midlands. Fred Smith of Chatham was well-known to all of us in the south-east, and his collapse while clearing snow and death in hospital some six hours later came as a shock to everyone. Fred, who was 53, was a loner with no close relations, who had to make his own way in life and was putting his spare time to good use after a career in the Navy. He too was a machine collector and restorer, and a frequent attendant at record bazaars, where he sometimes sold spare gramophones and phonographs.

We shall all miss this warm character in this part of the world, especially at our home where he was a frequent and welcome visitor.

George Frow.

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# London Meeting

JANUARY 20th 1987

One of my few pleasures during a January which is generally admitted to have been trying for one and all, was that of meeting a man who labours under the crushing title of "Curator of Western Art Music at the British Library National Sound Archive," and finding him to be, actually, not a bad chap.

Timothy Day came to the Bloomsbury Institute to tell us about the National Sound Archive; what it contains and what it sets out to do. By the end of the evening he had done more than that, he had intrigued and delighted us with a fascinating selection of gems from the treasure-house in Exhibition Road, where the Archive holds nearly half a million discs and over 35,000 hours of recorded tape. These totals are increasing still: some 20,000 commercial discs enter their care every year, and the BBC has agreed that the Archive's engineer's may record anything broadcast on their United Kingdom networks.

Four decades ago the Archive did not exist. It came into being only because a man named Patrick Saul saw the need for, and made it his mission in life to fight for, an organisation which would preserve and store and make available to the public all the recorded material it could collect, from the time of Edison onwards. Nowadays, when his ideal is safely achieved, and when you and I can visit Exhibition Road and ask to hear anything we please on the free listening service, alongside scholars and researchers who might fly in from the United States to spend two or three weeks solidly listening to records relating to their particular speciality, it is difficult to see Saul's scheme as anything other than eminently sensible and laudable. Yet to begin with he had to put up a long hard struggle against the apathy and lack of interest of those whose help he sought. Slowly his persistence paid off. An early triumph was a gift of money from the Decca Company - all of £200 - but one day Sir Robert Mayer agreed to guarantee the rent and rates on a house in Russell Square, and the National Sound Archive (or, as it was then called, the British Institute of Recorded Sound) was in business. Now, in addition to the wealth of recorded material mentioned, it has a vast library of printed material and microfilm relating to recorded sound, catalogues, discographies etc. available to the researcher.

Timothy's discourse was illustrated by a cleverly chosen sequence of records and recordings. We heard Ludwig Koch's dubbing of the original cylinder (now destroyed) of Johannes Brahms playing his Hungarian Dance No. 1. At least, so we were assured: one was vaguely aware of a distant tinkling piano playing something or other behind the sound of a raging waterfall: as high a noise-to-signal ratio as one could wish to hear. We heard the original villager from Saxby All-Saints, in Lincolnshire, who sang "Brigg Fair" into one of Percy Grainger's wax cylinders in 1908. We heard the composer Dame Ethel Smyth talking, in 1937, of her adventures as a suffragette. There was often a witty or pointed juxtaposition of complementary or contrasting pieces. For example, the recording of a tawny owl in Gloucestershire was followed by the garden sequence from Ravel's "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges", illustrating how faithfully this bird's cry is reproduced in the orchestra. We heard Aleksandr Michalowski, recorded in 1905, playing what was supposedly Chopin's Waltz in D flat (the "Minute" Waltz), but which proved to be a florid and interminable "vamp-till-ready".

It is a great shame that only the ten most hardy and intrepid Society Members

succeeded in getting through the Siberian weather to attend this meeting, but such was Timothy Day's urbane and entertaining style, such the rapport he established with his select audience, and so numerous the questions and comments he drew from them, that closing time was upon us before he had played more than two-thirds of his prepared programme. I fondly hope we might have the pleasure of listening to him again, when more of us can attend.

A.O.Leon-Hall

## To the Editor

### CELEBRITY

Apropos James Bacon's enquiry concerning his Celebrity gramophone, although I cannot comment on the machine itself, I can offer the following background information, based on my research into Celebrity records.

Apparently an unregistered company was already manufacturing and dealing in gramophones in 1927 in the Bermondsey area. This business became registered as the Celebrity Gramophone Co. Ltd. on November 1st. 1927 (the 'Limited' was an addition to the existing name). The first advertisement I have noted was published in August 1927, but there could have been earlier ones. It was for the Celebrity No. 1 portable model.

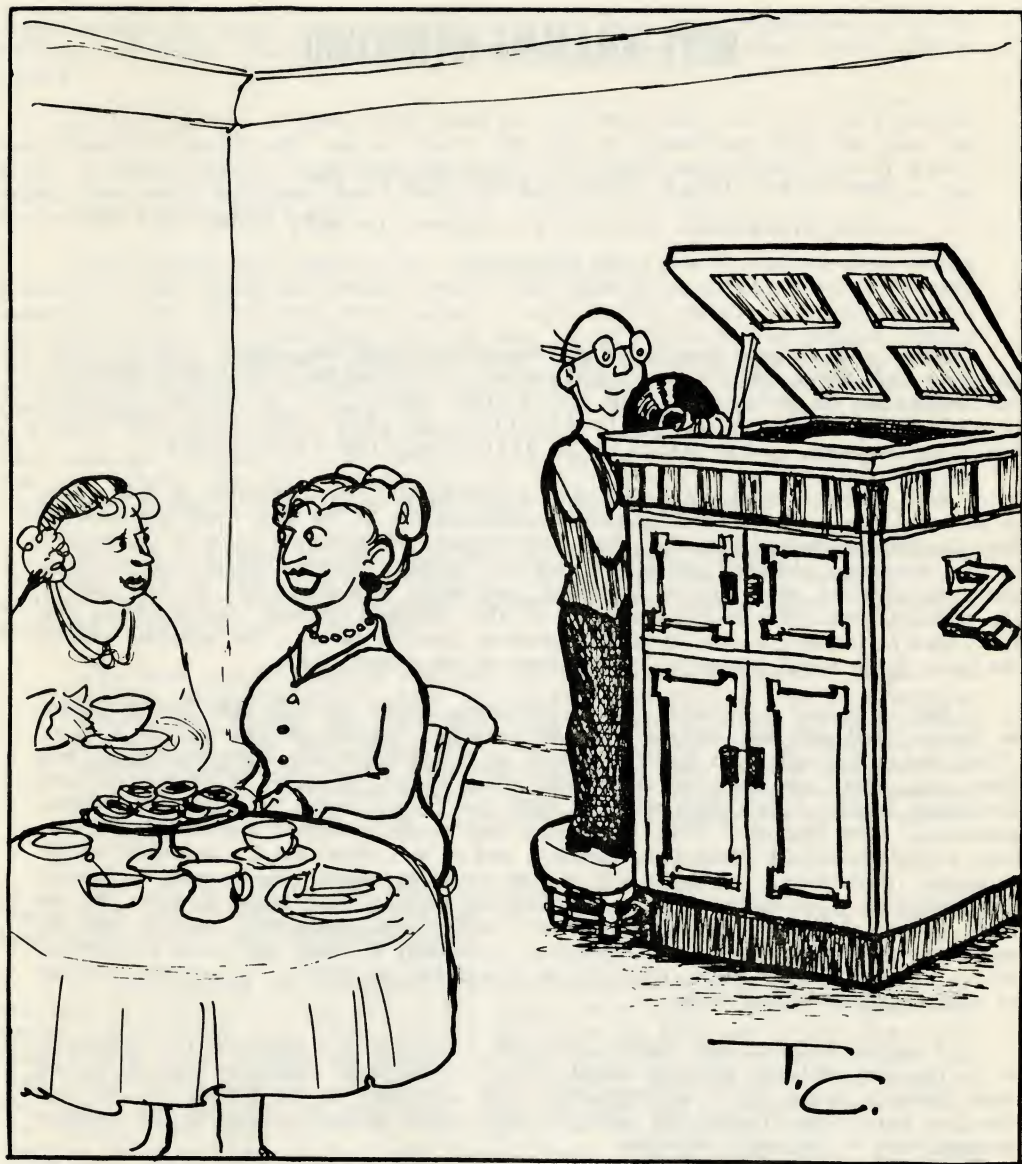
The Celebrity Gramophone Co. Ltd was at 179/181 Bermondsey St., S.E.1, and had a nominal capital of £10,000 in £1 shares. On June the 4th 1928 it was acquired by a new company called Celebrity Gramophones Ltd., capitalised at £60,000 with 2s. shares. This was a reformation of the former business owned by Francis Edgar Powell and Eric Leslie Powell, but with the addition of Charles Leslie Kempton, the Managing Director of Vocalion (Foreign) Ltd. as a further Director. Other directors joined the company as time passed, and the registered office was moved from 42 Bloomsbury Street to 36 New Broad Street in April 1929 and then to 179/185 Bermondsey Street in May 1930.

On May 4th. 1931, the company resolved to wind up its affairs voluntarily, and with a liquidator appointed the registered office was moved to 5 Budge Row, E.C.4. On March 15th, 1932, consent was given to a new company to be registered as Celebrity Gramophones (1932) Ltd. The former company showed a loss of £7,720 in 1930, its creditors receiving only 3½d. in the £1 in response to their claims. The final winding-up meeting was on June 10th 1936. The 1932 company was capitalised at £1,000 and registered at 115 Moorgate. In December 1932 it wished to increase its capital to £15,000 by an offer of 280,000 1s. shares.

Apparently none of the Celebrity companies applied for the word Celebrity as a trade mark, but 'Harlie' (on the pick-up of Mr. Bacon's gramophone) was the registered trade mark of Harlie Bros, manufacturers and merchants of 3 Balham Road, Lower Edmonton. It was registered, for use on radiograms, in November 1929.

Frank Andrews





"He built it entirely from 288,765 matchsticks;  
but, of course, we had to buy the record."

# BERT WILLIAMS ON RECORD

*Condensed from a lecture presented to the Society  
at the Bloomsbury Institute, London, in July 1986, by  
Allen Debus*

Some years ago Martin Williams contacted me about the Victor records of Bert Williams, and after a lengthy correspondence I was engaged to programme and write the notes for an album contemplated by the Smithsonian Institution on this important American black performer. This article is distilled from those notes.

Bert Williams is almost unique among acoustically recorded stars of the stage, in that we have a remarkably complete recorded history of his work from the time he first reached prominence until his death. He occupies an important place in the history of the American theatre. Together with his partner, George Walker, he produced the first all-black minstrels on Broadway, and after Walker's death he was one of the principal comedians in eight editions of the "Ziegfeld Follies", thus becoming the first black performer to star in major Broadway musical revues. He achieved this in the face of the racial prejudice then prevalent in the United States.

Bert Williams' grandfather was a plantation owner who had been Danish Consul in Antigua, and who had taken a wife three-quarters Spanish and one quarter African. They had a son who also married a lady of mixed black and white parentage, and their son, Bert, was born in the British West Indies, probably in 1874. He was christened Egbert Austin Williams. In 1885 the family moved to California, where, eventually, Bert graduated from high-school and hoped to attend Stanford University. This proved financially impossible, however, and it was then that he turned to entertainment. Bert played the banjo and was an excellent mimic. He learned to imitate the speech of the Southern blacks, masking his natural West Indian accent. In the early nineties he played the San Francisco saloons and restaurants, and in 1893 he joined Martin and Seig's Mastodon Minstrels, a company of black and white performers. Asked to find another black minstrel, he found George Walker, a seasoned veteran of minstrel and medicine shows.

Together Williams and Walker developed a comedy act based on the characters of a con-man and his trusting friend. Bert's 'hard-luck' character was contrasted with Walker's 'urban swell' who repeatedly took advantage of his friend. In real life the two were close friends, and until his final illness Walker handled all the business arrangements as the pair's manager.

Walker's experience with travelling shows had taught him that "white people are always interested in what they call 'darker' singing and dancing." Recalling the early nineties, he wrote: "In those days black-faced white comedians were numerous and popular. They billed themselves as 'coons'. Bert and I watched the white 'coons' .... trying to imitate black folks. Nothing about these men's actions was natural. We



finally decided that since white men with black faces were billing themselves as 'coons', Williams and Walker would do well to bill themselves the 'Two Real Coons', and so we did."

At first neither of them used make-up, but Bert (who was very light-skinned) soon found that burnt cork was an asset. He was to recall that "One day, just for a lark, I blacked my face and tried the song 'Oh, I don't know, you're not so warm.' Nobody was more surprised than I when it went like a house on fire." From that day he used blackface on stage.

After working San Francisco for nearly three years the pair moved East, joining a medicine show headed for Chicago, where they failed in an all-black revue. Success seemed to beckon when they were called to New York to appear in Victor Herbert's new comic opera 'The Gold Bug', but this was one of Herbert's few failures, running for only one week (21st-26th September 1896). They turned to vaudeville, to become an instant hit at Koster and Bial's Music Hall in an engagement beginning October 31st 1896. Over the next few years they toured with McIntyre and Heath and starred in a series of unsuccessful all-black revues, becoming leading exponents of the cakewalk which was part of their act. By 1900 they were widely recognised as talented comedians and dancers, but only in that year did they find a hit show to highlight their work: they opened in 'The Sons of Ham' which toured for two years.

Now, in the flush of their first success, they were engaged to make records for Victor. On October 11th, and November 8th and 11th, 1901, they recorded fifteen of their songs, some of which had been introduced in 'The Sons of Ham'. The Victor catalogue of February 1902 noted that:

"The most popular songs of the day are the 'rag-time' or 'coon' songs. The greatest recommendation a song of this kind can have is that it is sung by Williams and Walker, the 'Two Real Coons'. Their selections are always from the brightest and best songs with the most catchy and pleasing melodies. Although Williams and Walker have been engaged to make records exclusively for us at the highest price ever paid in the history of the talking machine business, being absolutely the real thing, we add them to our regular list with no advance in price."

These records did not sell well, nor were they very well recorded. All I have heard from the October 11th session suffer from some aural distortion. However, there is no denying their historical interest.

In 1903 Williams and Walker produced and starred in the first all-black Broadway musical, 'In Dahomey.' That this should happen in a major theatre offended some whites, and the New York Times reported that there had been talk of the show triggering a race war. Happily the opening, at the New York Theater on February 18th 1903, was without incident. The critics found it little different from other shows of the time except that the cast was black. The high point was a cakewalk contest, with the winning team being chosen by the applause of the audience. And in this show Williams introduced one of his most famous songs, "I'm a Jonah Man." He never recorded it, but others did, including Arthur Collins on Zonophone. This song was important to Williams, who wrote, in 1918:

"Nearly all my successful songs have been based on the idea that I am getting the worst of it. I am 'The Jonah Man,' the man who, even if it rained soup,

would be found with a fork in his hand and no spoon in sight; the man whose fighting relatives come to visit him and whose head is always dented by the furniture they throw at each other."

'In Dahomey' had only a modest run before the company left for London to open at the Shaftesbury Theatre on April 28th 1903. The 'Theatre Magazine' praised the team and noted that Williams was "a vastly funnier man than any white comedian on the American stage. He is spontaneously funny. Nature has endowed him with a comic mask and he succeeds in obtaining with voice and gesture ludicrous effects that are irresistible."

The show became a sensation when Edward VII summoned the company to a Command Performance to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Wales, and demanded that they teach him to do the cakewalk. After that they were accepted by everyone. The troupe toured the provinces, and did not return to New York until August 1904, to re-open at the Grand Opera House before going on to a forty-week tour of the United States. In England demand for the show was so great that a second company was sent across the Atlantic.

Williams and Walker followed 'In Dahomey' with two other all-black musicals; 'Abyssinia' which opened at the Majestic on Broadway on February 20th 1906, and 'Bandana Land' which opened at the same theatre two years later. During the run of 'Abyssinia' they made another group of records, this time for Columbia. These are far superior to the Victors but, once again, sales were only moderate. They include the titles 'Pretty Desdemona' and 'Let it Alone.' Once again, none of the numbers from 'Bandana Land' were recorded by the principal artists, but the song most closely identified with George Walker, 'Bon Bon Buddy', was recorded by Billy Murray.

At the peak of their career tragedy struck. Walker was stricken with paresis and suffered from loss of memory, emotional tantrums, stuttering and unsteadiness. As the disease progressed he appeared on stage less frequently, his wife Ada Overton Walker singing 'Bon Bon Buddy' in his place. Walker appeared in 'Bandana Land' for the last time in February 1909 and was then confined to a sanatorium on Long Island where he died two years later.

Williams and the troupe put together a new musical, 'Mr. Lode of Koal', which opened at the Majestic on November 1st 1909, but it was at best a moderate success, and Williams turned again to vaudeville, this time with a hit song 'Play the Barbershop Chord'. He was then contracted by Florenz Ziegfeld, and it was announced in May 1910 that he had been signed for the next edition of the "Follies". It was the first time that a black artist was to star alongside white performers in a major Broadway musical production. It was a sensitive issue and Williams insisted that his contract include a clause stating that at no time would he be on stage with any of the female members of the company. The "Follies" of 1910 opened at the Jardin de Paris, on the roof of the New York Theater, on June 20th 1910, introducing Fanny Brice, who sang 'Lovie Joe' while the legendary beauty, Lillian Lorraine, sang 'Swing me High, Swing me Low.' Bert Williams is best remembered for three numbers: 'That Minor Strain,' 'I'll Lend you Anything I've Got except my Wife (and I'll Make you a Present of Her)', and 'Something you don't Expect.' The last two were recorded, excellently, for Columbia.

Williams starred in all but two of the "Follies" from 1910 to 1919, working with many of the most famous comedians of the era: Leon Errol, Ed Wynn, W.C.Fields, Eddie Cantor, Will Rogers, and Van and Schenck.



He signed a new contract with Columbia in 1910. It brought him luck, and the records he made from that date until his death usually sold in large quantities. One of them was an example of his story-telling: "You can't do nothin' 'till Martin gets here", dealing with the terror of a black preacher in a haunted house full of cats, but the record was not released until after his death in 1922.

The "Follies of 1914" presented one of Bert Williams' greatest moments, his famous "Darktown Poker Club". On stage he accompanied this song with a pantomime poker game in which he was the only player. The song was recorded, and the routine has been preserved on film. Another of his classics came from his final appearance in the "Ziegfeld Follies" (1919), 'The Moon shines on the Moonshine'. It was such a hit that he carried it over to his next show, "Broadway Brevities of 1920", which was a dismal failure even though Williams' co-star was Eddie Cantor. Columbia chose to record some of Bert Williams' numbers from this show: in addition to 'Moonshine' he recorded 'Eve Cost Adam just One Bone', 'Save a Little Dram for Me,' 'You'll Never Need a Doctor no More' and 'I Want to Know where Tosti Went When he Said Goodbye for Ever.'

Williams returned to vaudeville with a new act. An interesting number from this period is 'It's Getting so You Can't Trust Nobody,' written for him by the black composers and vaudevillians, Henry Creamer and Turner Layton. Creamer had been writing for Williams from the early years of the century, and the team of Creamer and Layton had scored with such hits as 'After you've Gone,' 'Goodbye Alexander' and 'Way Down Yonder in New Orleans.' We can compare Williams' recording of 'It's Getting so You Can't Trust Nobody' with that of the composers, who recorded it for Black Swan with Fletcher Henderson's Band in April 1921.

Bert Williams declined to join the 1918 "Follies" because of poor circulation and a weak heart, and in the following years his condition deteriorated. Nevertheless he agreed to star in one more production, "Under the Bamboo Tree", which opened at the Studebaker Theater in Chicago on December 11th 1921. The reviews were excellent and the show moved to Detroit on its way to New York, but on February 21st Williams collapsed on stage after singing 'Gravitation' at the end of the first act, with the audience calling for an encore. His condition was serious; a special railroad car was chartered immediately for his return home to New York. He must have rallied slightly for his final recording 'Not Lately,' made in New York on February 24th 1922, but he continued to decline and died on March 4th.

How are we to deal with Bert Williams today? Few would question his genius, but his use of blackface and his 'Jonah Man' character project an image objectionable to some now. Some twenty years ago a television documentary cited him and Stepin Fetchit as examples of the unhealthy image of the blacks portrayed by American entertainment in the past. But this is to remove Bert Williams from the context of his time. True, he objected to the racial discrimination from which he suffered, but he was not a militant. The 'coon songs' and minstrel shows of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may have offended some, but for most of the population - and not only the whites - they were an accepted and traditional part of entertainment. It is pointless to criticise Bert Williams for his material or his use of burnt cork. Rather we should honour him for his genius and for his contribution to the American stage.

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# Reviews

JOHN McCORMACK: CENTENARY DISCOGRAPHY, 1904-1942

By E.G.Mathews - published by the author at Bergamo Press

A5 vi 72pp., 9pp. illustrations

This slim, well produced volume is a credit to the compiler. Mr. Mathews has obviously spent a considerable amount of time and energy, not to mention his own money, in producing this version of a John McCormack discography. Many others there have been, many others have claimed to be the only correct one - a claim incidentally that he does not make - many others, in fact most of the others, are not as complete as Mr. Mathews'. What discographer can be certain of completeness?

Mr. Mathews has included the Regals, OKeys, Columbias, and sundry other issues of the International Talking Machine Company associates so often omitted. Errors and corrections are admitted and are noted; there are even two blank pages, thoughtfully ruled with blue faint lines - collated into the back of the volume for notes and additions.

The entries follow a chronological entry number format; information is based upon the actual labels and other authoritative sources used to cross-check and amend as necessary. I was pleased to note that two friends among others collaborated in the research, Laurie Wilson of Hereford and Chris Sullivan of London.

The printing, which is first class, relies on typographical styles to denote single or double sided issues and similar details; this may take some time for non-printers to grasp, but it is a well-tried system from the past. Only two hundred copies have been printed, about half of which have been sold already. The CLPGS booklist is NOT carrying this edition, but copies may be obtained direct from the author at the address below.

I recommend this volume to all McCormack collectors wishing to have as complete a listing as any of the 78s, cylinders and film soundtracks of Count John. Microgroove issues of otherwise unpublished recordings are also included.

Available from: E.G.Mathews, [REDACTED] LLANDEILO SA19 7TA.

Price £7.00, post paid in U.K.

John W. Booth

## A SULLIVAN DISCOGRAPHY

Edited by Terence Rees - published by the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society

This discography attempts to itemise all the pre-microgroove recordings on disc of Sir Arthur Sullivan's music, with the exception of the complete and abridged

sets of the Savoy operas which appeared on Columbia and HMV records. These are to be published as a separate entity. The book has 100 pages, of art paper, with soft covers. The outside of the front cover depicts and HMV 'D' series label, and the other three pages show twelve more rarely seen today.

The discography has been divided into separate repertoires. The first section is devoted to the operas, from "Box and Cox" to "The Yeomen of the Guard", giving the date and the theatre of the first performance. The items within each opera are listed alphabetically, rather than by their order of appearance in the opera, which makes particular titles easier to find. Selections recorded exclusively from each opera are placed after the last individual title's entries, again with the recording artists in alphabetical order.

Following the operatic section comes the selections of Sullivan's music from all spheres. These do not identify individual titles within the selections, but mention is made of those pieces which were seldom recorded.

This section is followed by one page of Sullivan's music used in theatrical productions. Next comes the orchestral music section which is arranged in chronological order of composition. Dates of first performances and venues are given for these last two sections. The Choral Works section is similarly arranged.

Solo songs come next, with over seven pages of "The Lost Chord", ranging from Caruso to a street barrel piano! These are in alphabetical order of title, with composition dates given. They are followed by the part songs in a similar fashion.

The last section is of Sullivan's church music. The titles are in alphabetical order, but the names of the tunes are also given (but not in alphabetical order), and also the year of composition.

There are pages of explanatory text about the layout, system employed in detailing each recording, and Mr. Rees's own abbreviations to indicate the 116 labels entered in the discography (although I would have treated Ariel and Ariel Grand Record as one entry).

This being the first attempt at listing the older recordings of Sullivan's music, the compiler is well aware that many have escaped his net, especially as the recordings listed are mostly from British marketed issues, although some American and Continental labels are included.

Although I have not examined the entries closely I can see that there are a number of minor errors in the discography. For example Parlophones are sometimes given as being re-issues of Ariel Grand Records; in fact, the Parlophones were the primary label, from which the Ariel Grands were sub-contracted.

There are two photographs showing the casts of the Odeon recordings of "H.M.S. Pinafore" and "The Mikado". Unfortunately, although the names of the artists are given, the photographs have no 'key' by which they can be individually identified.

For those with a general interest in British composers and in Sir Arthur Sullivan in particular this is an excellent and comprehensive work. It should also interest all those with a penchant for records generally, as it becomes fascinating to trace the manner in which some matrices were employed to press quite a number of differently



labelled records.

The booklet is available from the C.L.P.G.S. Booklist at £4.80 post paid (U.K.: overseas £5.00)

Frank Andrews

*If any Member can fill in some of the wanted matrices, or can correct or add to any of the entries in the above work, I would be grateful if they communicate with me at [REDACTED] Road, London N.W.10. I will subsequently pass all such information on to Mr. Rees or the Sullivan Society. - F.A.*

### THE COMPLEAT TALKING MACHINE

by Eric L. Reiss - published by the Vestal Press, New York

New books on talking machines, records and companies are always welcome. Our interest, for all our enthusiasm, is a minority pursuit, and books on most aspects of our subject weigh lightly on the shelves of even the best-stocked public libraries. Every new book of 'serious worth' in this field, to use the well-known and opinionated term of Girard and Barnes, is something of an event to the enthusiast, and it is a pleasure to find one which is not only interesting, but useful. This new book by Eric L. Reiss, an American member of our Society, fits both descriptions and deserves a place in many a machine collector's music room and workshop.

Described as "A Guide to the Restoration of Antique Phonographs" (and surely we need not be too pedantic over the adjective) this book deals with the mechanical and acoustical parts, and also the cabinets, of cylinder and disc machines, from the early Edison spring-driven phonographs to the acoustic gramophones of the mid-nineteen-twenties, the end of the acoustic recording era. The book, which goes into considerable and necessary detail, is sensibly arranged into three main sections, covering respectively mechanical, acoustical and cabinet matters, and gives thorough, step-by-step guidance on the cleaning, repair and general restoration of machines.

The 'mechanical' section, particularly where it deals with the removal, repair, lubrication and replacement of mainsprings, is commendably thorough, and can be regarded as a trustworthy guide to those about to work on machine restoration for the first time. Equal care has been taken with the details of reproducers, both hill-and-dale and lateral, and of horns, but not the re-entrant variety. Sound advice is also given on the important subject of cabinet restoration. The author gives space, with justification, to the subject of correct tracking of the stylus across the disc and the degree of 'offset' of the soundbox and stylus in relation to the tone-arm, which can only have a profound effect on the quality of musical reproduction, but also affect record wear. This, of course, leaves the owners of some machines in dilemma. Some gramophones, for instance the Victor II of 1909 and subsequent years, had no offset of the soundbox at all, a shortcoming of design which produced a tracking error in excess of 17 degrees, an extremely high and undesirable figure. This raises the question of what to do about it. This reviewer's answer is: Nothing. Best to keep the machine in its original condition and play one's treasured records of the Golden Age on a more suitable gramophone. Mutilation should be avoided at all costs.

There are about 400 photographs reproduced in the book, most of which are

to illustrate points of detail. They are of excellent clarity and are mainly the work of the author, who is to be congratulated on their quality. Even so, one feels it would have been better not to show a steel-headed hammer being applied directly to the vertical spindle to remove a reluctant turntable.

It is natural that an American author should concentrate upon Edison, Victor and other American machines, but this should cause no problems for British and other readers. Sometimes one comes across the name of an American branded product; 'Sterno' is a familiar name to all British disc and machine collectors, but in the book it refers to a fuel for heating tools, a form of jellified alcohol.

The book concludes with a glossary of phonographic terms and a talking machine "Who Was Who". There are other appendices which deal with the art of soldering, the making of stroboscopes, and so on. There is also a well-captioned, but with no pretence of being comprehensive, picture gallery of notable external horn machines, both cylinder and disc.

To sum up: a useful and carefully written book. If there are any errors of phonographic fact, this reviewer could find none, just a zoological error on Page 153, where a spider is referred to as an insect.

There are 183 pages, full of information, in this large format publication, and the book is available as a paperback at £12.50, post paid U.K. or £13.20 European Continent and surface mail to all countries. Hardback prices are £19.00 and £20.00 respectively. Orders should be placed with Dave Roberts, [REDACTED] Pyrford, Woking, Surrey GU22 8TN, England, and all cheques should be in Sterling and payable to 'CLPGS (Books)'.

Ken Loughland

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## HOW TO PLAY THE SYMPOSIUM

by Ted Cunningham

The C.L.P.G.S enjoys the reputation of being a learned Society, more or less, and the forthcoming symposium at Hatfield Palace is rightly being planned as a serious occasion. Serious but not, I hope, solemn. To the ancient Greeks a symposium was "a convivial meeting for drinking, conversation, and intellectual entertainment", and I believe our symposium will include some degree of all those activities, although probably not in that order of priority.

The day's programme will include speakers from the front rank of the talking machine world. LAURENCE STAPLEY, former head of BBC Recording Services, will be dipping into the history of recorded sound. ROBERT PARKER, who has received world-wide acclaim for his painstaking reconstructions of early jazz recordings, has not only agreed to come and tell us about his work, but will make the journey from Australia to England a month sooner than originally planned, in order to do so. When so eminent a recording engineer pays such a compliment to this Society I feel sure our members will want to come and hear what he has to say. And now I am



able to announce that, in this year of the centenary of Emile Berliner's first patent for disc recording, PETER ADAMSON will come to Hatfield to deliver an appropriate lecture on the subject. This news gives me pleasure, since for a long while it appeared certain that Peter would be in the United States at the time of our festival.

All this outpouring of "intellectual entertainment" will cost the visitor nothing, because the £13.00 that he has paid for his ticket is solely the cost of the lunch and other refreshment which will be provided for him during the day. That must be a bargain by any standard. (Please note: this does NOT mean that people turning up with their own sandwiches will be let in free. In fact, there will be NO ADMISSION ON THE DAY to anybody who has not previously obtained a ticket. This is something we have had to agree with the Old Palace authorities, so please, please, don't roll up at Hatfield on Sunday April 26th expecting to buy a ticket at the gate. You must obtain one in advance from our Treasurer, Mike Field.)

While on the subject of do's and don'ts, let me mention that those arriving at Hatfield by motor car should present their tickets at the gate and then drive straight through, along the great tree-lined avenue, to the car-park situated between Hatfield House and the Old Palace. Do not be seduced into parking outside Hatfield Station; the car-park shown on the sketch map in our publicity brochure is intended purely as a landmark. Motorists arriving in good time for the morning session beginning at 10.00 a.m. will find plenty of room in the private car-park, although it might get a bit full from 12.00 onwards, when Hatfield House is open to visitors.

Which reminds me that your symposium ticket gains you admission to Hatfield House, if you wish to be shown over it, at less than half the regular fee. And if that isn't enough for you, Lord Salisbury's staff have promised me that at mid-day your lunch will be served with elan and panache by real Elizabethan serving wenches. (Those who dislike foreign food may order carrots and peas instead of elan and panache.)

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## VITAPHONE

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

I was pleased to read Michael Quinn's information on the Vitaphone operatic shorts in Hillandale 153. Mr. Quinn has (just about) completed the information on these films which I have been seeking for some years now.

It is known that opera singers made 46 shorts, and all are now accounted for. The singers and the number of shorts to their credit are as follows (some singers in concerted items not mentioned):

Frances Alda	3	Mary Lewis	2
Pasquale Amato	1	Giovanni Martinelli	12
John Barclay	2	Allan Prior	1
Anna Case	2	Rosa Raisa	3
Guido Ciccolini	1	Ernestine Schumann-Heink	3
Giuseppe de Luca	1 (+1 w Gigli)	Marion Talley	1 (+ 2 with Gigli)
Beniamino Gigli	5	John Charles Thomas	3
Charles Hackett	3	Reinald Werrenrath	2
Hope Hampton	1		

Mr. Quinn lists some operatic shorts by companies other than the Vitaphone Corporation. That other companies leapt on to the Vitaphone bandwagon is not surprising: but I am surprised that a Paramount short was copyrighted as early as May 1927 (Schipa, Concert No.2). Should the date really be 1929? And has anyone any information on Allan Prior and Hope Hampton?

I can supply Mr. Quinn with some information. Anna Case died in 1984 (info. from member Quentin Riggs), and Reinald Werrenrath in 1953 (who according to Kutsch and Riemans, was born in 1883, not 1876).

Yours sincerely, George Taylor

Dear Christopher,

Referring to Alan Shepherd's letter in the December Hillandale News, it is interesting to hear that Marks and Spencer (that "3d. to 5/- store") were clearing out deleted Regal Zonophones during the last war, as this company had long been associated with Rex and Decca by this time, following their handling of Imperial in the earlier thirties.

The Regal-Zonophone catalogue up to the war reflected perhaps as much contemporary social history in its own way as the more exalted H.M.V. and Columbia, while Parlophone remained continental and stand-offish. The 1/6d. Regal-Zonophones from the mid-thirties were essentially fun records with Gracie Fields, George Formby, Joe Loss and later Glen Miller, but the Celebrity records at 3/6d. were nearly all old-fashioned and a bit dull and remained unchanged for years, while the 12-inch at 4/- compared badly to the other E.M.I. equivalents.

As a rough guide, the catalogue to April 1938 had 113 pages, to September 1939 99 pages, to June 1940 107 pages, to June 1941 93 pages, then it slimmed down rapidly until by June 1951 there were only 16. An influx of new records and a reluctance to excise the old accounted for the size of the June 1940 catalogue, but all the 12 inch and most of the Celebrity were dropped after that date, which would account for those Alan Shepherd saw on offer.

Regal-Zonophone remained loyal to its less affluent supporters for as long as it could, it carried for years much dross and trivia, but many of these sentimental and sacred pieces went through the several label styles on being re-pressed, although quite a number with smaller demand still carried the old green Zonophone label, and were still being sold through 1940; I have some bought at that time. With key inner-city rents at anything up to £50 a square foot, and with high rates, wages and overheads, a comparable long-term storage would be out of the question now.

It is tempting to expand and to open up some of the topic possibilities the Regal-Zonophone catalogue offers, as well as some personal recollections of this label, but this is not the occasion. May I ask Alan Shepherd or anyone else if they have seen or possess Celebrity or 12-inch Regals or Zonophones in either of the red and green Regal-Zonophone labels, or in 12-inch Regal-Zonophone bags? These I have never found though I think they must exist. Regal-Zonophone never admitted to acoustic records in any of the catalogues I have seen, nor Regal in 1930, but Zonophone did in later days and gave their first electric 10-inch as 2711; 12-inch as A299; Celebrity GO 68 (with exceptions).

George Frow



# London Meeting

25th November 1986

## THE RECORD INDUSTRY IN INDIA - THE EARLY YEARS

Michael Kinnear, an Australian member currently living in England and researching the early years of the recording industry, presented a most interesting account of early recording in India, from the beginning of the century to approximately 1914.

This story can be roughly divided into two eras: when the first recording expeditions of the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. went to India, they sent their matrices back to Europe, where these were pressed at Hanover and then shipped back to India for the developing market there. Later, in 1908, the Gramophone Company Ltd. (who had established a branch office in Calcutta as early as 1901) began pressing records at its newly established factory in Sealdah, an urban area of Calcutta. This development brought the complete recording and manufacturing process to India, thereby eliminating the delay caused by processing master recordings thousands of miles away. Although the presence of a pressing factory in Calcutta was obviously very significant for the expansion of the recording industry in India, it also played a profound role as the industry developed in various regions of East and South-East Asia, since master recordings from these areas were sent to India for pressing.

Throughout his talk, Mr. Kinnear not only made us aware of the broad sweep of developments, but also filled in many details of specific companies, and various recording expeditions, information about which has rarely, if ever, been presented before. He revealed that the recording industry in India was of a far more international nature than one might have expected. Even before commercial expeditions arrived from Europe, however, an early one being that of the American Fred Gaisberg in 1902-03 for G. & T., we learned that a Mr. H.M. Bose in Calcutta had already made cylinder recordings of performances in several different Indian languages. H. Bose is often referred to as the "first talking machine in India", and not only produced the recordings but also manufactured the cylinder blanks in Calcutta and had his recordings released as H. Bose's Records by late 1905. As might be expected in a competitive market place, other companies in Europe soon sensed the potential of the Indian subcontinent for this business. Additional expeditions were mounted by companies such as the Nicole Record Co. Ltd. of London in 1904, Beka (of Berlin) in late 1905, and also the Lyrophone Company of Berlin, whose Indian recordings, although manufactured in Germany were released on the indigenous Ramaphone (Ramagraph) and James Opera Disc record labels in India. Some information about the activities of the International Talking Machine Co. mbh Berlin and their Odeon record were given, and likewise the activities of another doyen of the Indian recording industry by the name of Valabhdas Runchordas and his association with the Beka, Odeon and his own Viel-o-phone.

After Gaisberg's initial tour, G. & T. mounted a second expedition to India late in 1904, led by another American, William Sinkler Darby. Capitalizing on the lessons learned from Gaisberg's work, Darby travelled widely throughout India, and recorded artists from several of the classical traditions of Indian music. Previously Gaisberg had only recorded in Calcutta, and his recordings were predominantly of artists associated with the very active Calcutta theatre world.

Mr. Kinnear also discussed the role of Indian businessmen in the recording industry

in the subcontinent. A comprehensive account was given of Dwarkin and Son, Universal Talking Machine Depot, and others included Mukherjee and Mukharji who manufactured the Royal Record in India in 1906 and the Binapani Recording Company; both of these manufactured disc records in India before the Gramophone Co.'s Calcutta factory was established in 1908 at Calcutta. The Binapani company was succeeded by the Kamala Recording Co. Unfortunately, lack of time prevented a detailed discussion of their further activities. A most interesting aspect of this part of the presentation consisted of several intriguing comments about the relationship between Indian recording firms, who proudly produced the "only real Swadeshi (fully Indian-made) records", and the growing nationalistic consciousness of the Indian community.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the history of the recording industry in India provides valuable information for several different areas of enquiry. Firstly, enthusiasts of the recording industry welcome details about a little-known area. Secondly, those researching musical traditions of the subcontinent find much useful information in the speaker's work. Thirdly, certain aspects of the story will no doubt throw new light on the social and political history of the subcontinent during the turbulent times leading to independence in 1947. In short, the history of a fascinating industry in one region of Asia appeals to a broad variety of interests.

The talk was illustrated with newspaper advertisements of the companies under discussion, record catalogues and numerous photographs of Indian record labels and discs. Two early recordings were played, which elicited comments and questions not only about the technical details of their production, but also about various features of Indian music. The members enthusiastically confirmed the vote of thanks extended to Mr. Kinnear by the President. By all accounts, he was the first 'Antipodean' to address the Society.

Reis Flora Ph.d.

*We would like to thank Dr. Flora for compiling the above report; a senior lecturer at Monash University, Victoria, Australia, he was coincidentally in London for a brief visit at the time. He has provided the Foreword to Michael Kinnear's recently published book "A Discography of Hindustani and Karnatic Music" - Greenwood Press, U.S.A. 1985.*

#### REPLACING MAINSPRINGS

Included in the advertisements on the 'EXTRAS' sent out with this issue is a warning from Phonoservices concerning a method of releasing mainsprings suggested in Eric Reiss' book *The Compleat Talking Machine*, reviewed also in this issue. We wish to make it clear that the Society does not endorse any particular method of handling mainsprings, and would advise that *Mainsprings can damage your health.*

#### LONDON MEETINGS:

March 17: Chris Hamilton, 'The Scottish Connection II'

April 21: Geoff Edwards, 'A Nostalgic Evening of Recorded Music'



## COLONEL GOURAUD, I PRESUME?

Illustrated on the back cover is perhaps the most historic phonograph to have come on the market in the last decade, if not ever. It was presented by Colonel Gouraud to H.M.Stanley, of 'Dr. Livingstone I presume' fame, as a wedding present in 1890, and carries a silver plaque recalling that fact in the grandiloquent tones that one would expect from the Colonel. Like Gouraud, Stanley was an American citizen (although he had been born in Wales), and had taken part in the Civil War; it is thus not surprising that Gouraud should have thought him a suitable recipient of what was at the time still a rare commodity in this country, and one that no ordinary mortal could obtain, theoretically at least, save by hiring.

The machine is a Class M, housed in an elaborate cabinet of birch. It is interesting that at this stage in its development, the phonograph was considered worthy of display under glass, just like the stereo decks of today. An ingenious feature is the automatic locking mechanism for the cylinder drawers, which is released when the curved front cover is opened.

The lower two drawers contain some fifty brown wax cylinders, mostly recordings of the Stanley family and friends, some of them celebrities in their own right. If you feel like saving up for this small addition to your collection of portables, you have until April 16th, when it is due to be auctioned at Christie's South Kensington. For Michael Kinneer, by the way, the same sale will include some 7" G&T Hindustani and Bengali records, along with some others of the same size of Hebrew, Polish and operatic interest, mostly G&T but some Berliner and some Zonophone. There is even a 'New Style No. 3' Gramophone to play them on.

## HANDEL DISCOGRAPHY

The subject of obscure early recordings leads neatly into the following request from the AMERICAN HANDEL SOCIETY:

*For a computerized discography of recordings of the works of George Frideric Handel now under way, Mr. David Edelberg and the American Handel Society seek information about, and leads toward obscure, rare, and early recordings, as well as those issued in Eastern Europe, South America, Asia etc: public or private collections of recordings or related material likely to be of interest; important non-commercial items, including air checks and off-air tapes. Mr. Edelberg has already catalogued more than 2,800 performances on l.p., tape and CD; the AHS is now beginning work on pre-l.p. items using the Rigler-Deutsch Record Index and other discographic tools.*

*For pre-l.p. items or in general:  
The American Handel Society  
Department of Music  
UNiversity of Maryland  
College Park, MD 20742  
USA*

*For modern items:  
Mr. David Edelberg  
Airtek Ltd./Ltee*

*Montreal, PQ  
Canada H4S 1C1*

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